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JERUSALEM.

BY SELAH MERRILL, D. D., LL.D.,

U. S. Consul at Jerusalem.

Many persons who visit Jerusalem are no doubt disappointed because the actual city which they behold is so unlike the ideal one which they have pictured to themselves. With a few this disappointment arises from sheer ignorance of what they had a right to expect, and for this they have no one but themselves to blame. Jerusalem is not a city of broad streets, beautiful gardens, fine houses, elegant suburbs with lovely promenades, grand hotels, theatres and attractive places of entertainment. Travelers who expect to find any of these things in Jerusalem simply show that they have read nothing about the place ; and if their object in coming here is chiefly to enjoy them as they would do at a pleasure resort in Europe, they certainly ought never to come. Strange as it may seem, such travelers appear from time to time in the Holy City ; but fortunately for the reputation of the countries from which they come, the number is small. Having seen thousands of travelers to the Holy Land, it gives me pleasure to testify that the large majority of them come with an earnest desire to learn all they can of this wonderful country. At the same time, many of these very persons do themselves an injustice, because they have failed to study carefully, before coming here, at least one of the many books descriptive of the place and scenes which they intend to visit.

Formerly, before so many buildings were erected on the west of the city, Jerusalem presented a very imposing aspect to those who approached it from that direction. Now, to one coming on the Jaffa Road, at the very point, about a mile out, where otherwise the walls and minarets would begin to be seen, a row of modern houses on either side of the street, mostly occupied by Jews, here and there a few dirty shops kept by Jews, and the lofty Russian buildings in the foreground, are the chief objects that meet the eye ; and these certain-

ly do not awaken any wonderful emotions, perhaps not even the slightest degree of enthusiasm.

The case would be different were one to approach the city from the north, that is, from the direction of Nablous or Shechem. New buildings are being erected north-west and north of the city; but because the ground in that quarter is comparatively low, they can never obstruct the view of Jerusalem itself. From this direction Titus, at the head of the fifth, twelfth and fifteenth legions, approached the city. These encamped on Scopus, which is directly north of Jerusalem, and looked down upon the massive walls which they had come to overthrow and the proud structure of the Temple which they had come to destroy.

If ever a railroad is built between Jaffa and Jerusalem, it will be a pity if the Jerusalem depot cannot be located at this point, since, although it is a mile from the city, it commands such a splendid view of the town that even those who are not subject to impressions would find themselves deeply moved, were they to have this scene brought suddenly before them. Soon after Titus reached Scopus, the tenth legion came up by way of Jericho, and camped on the Mount of Olives. From this direction the view, although unlike that from the north, is still very imposing. Coming from the south, or Bethlehem, the aspect of the city is wholly changed,—grandeur has given place to the picturesque.

What is the advantage in coming to Jerusalem? Very few things can be pointed out as having actually existed in the time of Christ. We have the rock beneath the Mosque of Omar, where the Temple actually stood. We can certainly point to the location of the Castle of Antonia, where Paul was confined before being taken to Cesarea-on-the-Sea. We can point out the old stones of Herod's Temple, where the Jews wail over the sanctuary fallen in the dust and trodden down. We can show the pillars of the double and triple gates of the Temple area, through which our Lord must have passed. Moreover, we can point out the site and some of the stones of the Tower of Herod, which was called "Hippicus," in the castle near the Jaffa gate. Perhaps, besides these, a few other objects of minor importance can be shown as genuine relics of nineteen centuries ago; but all else is changed. Everything is unreal, unsatisfactory, disappointing, and even disgusting, and leads us away from the Master, rather than brings us into closer communion with Him. Simply as a city, Jerusalem is not worth a trip across an ocean and a continent to visit it. But in its sacred and historical associations, for which chiefly it should be visited, no other city on earth can be compared with it. Even the

dinginess and filth of its narrow streets, the wretchedness of its modern houses, and the misery, ignorance, and degradation of its present inhabitants, are not looked upon in vain by the devout traveler, since these forbidding objects teach what a mighty moral and physical purification is needed before this city can become again the "joy of the whole earth."

I have referred to the view from Scopus, and I am sure that the most satisfactory thing the traveler can do is to go entirely around the walls of the city, and later to make a wider circuit, and view Jerusalem from all the hill tops, north, east, south and west, from which it is visible. Hinnom, Kedron, the Valley of Jehoshaphat, the Mount of Olives, the Plain of Rephaim, the home of the prophet Samuel, the camps of the Roman legions, the camps of the crusading armies, the site of the Temple, the place of our Lord's crucifixion, the burial place of Herod the Great, the Dead Sea, the Jordan, the Plain of Jericho, the Mountains of Moab, Nebo, the River Jabbok, the Gilead Hills,—these names bring before the reader's mind but a portion of the places and scenes of historical events that are brought under the eye as one looks abroad, say from the top of Olivet. What a place are the slopes and summit of this mountain for re-reading the Bible! It becomes a "new version," more vivid and impressive than any that the choicest and most devout scholarship can possibly produce.

These remarks will indicate the direction in which the Christian will find his chief advantage in visiting Jerusalem.

It is true that one may have special tastes which he wishes to cultivate, or to gratify, by a visit to Jerusalem and the Holy Land. He may wish to study the manners and customs, the dress and daily life of the present inhabitants, in order to illustrate those of Bible times. He may wish to study the habits of the birds and animals which enliven the dead hillsides and plains, or to collect the flowers which in the spring literally carpet the fields. He may wish to study languages, and as there are no less than thirty-five spoken here, his opportunity, in this respect, is of the rarest kind. He may wish to study the site and structure of the Temple, and the topography of the ancient city, and in this line, he will find a multitude of problems that will try his patience and vex his soul. Again, he may be wasting his mental energies on the question whether oriental Christianity and the oriental churches may not be wonderfully fine things, if only they could be subjected to slight modifications and improvements; here he would be brought face to face with these oriental churches and Christians, and it is more than probable that a few weeks or months of actual contact would suffice to restore him to his right mind on this

plausible but delusive subject. When one can pick up a dry bone in the street, and by his breath clothe it with flesh and life, then he may think of undertaking to reform these oriental churches.

Questions are frequently asked as to the population of Jerusalem at the present time. No definite answer can be given as might be done in the case of an American city or town, still it is possible to arrive at the approximate number. In some American papers which reach me from time to time, I see the wildest statements as to the inhabitants of this city, the number varying from 50,000 to 150,000 Jews alone.

It belongs to the duties of this Consulate to report to Washington the number of inhabitants in Jerusalem, and for this purpose we take the greatest care to ascertain the facts of the case within a reasonable degree of certainty; but, as there is no census, exact results cannot be obtained.

The present population we place at about 42,000; of this number one-half are Jews, one-fourth Christians, and one-fourth Moslems. Probably the Christians, including Protestants and all the nominal Christian sects, are a little less than one-fourth, the Moslems nearly one-fourth, and the Jews a little more than one-half. During the past five years there has been a great increase in the Jewish population, no less than ten thousand having arrived in Palestine. Not all of this number remain, nor do they all settle in Jerusalem. Hebron, Safed and Tiberias, because they are sacred cities, and Jaffa, because it has business and commerce, receive each their share, although by far the larger number crowd into the Holy City.

Although the city is small, the habits of Orientals are such that a limited amount of house room will accommodate a large number of people. A single family, numbering from four to eight persons, will manage to live in a single room. It will be understood that such rooms are not crowded with all kinds of furniture. There will be a large divan, a miniature table (possibly), and a hole in the wall, where the quilts are stuffed out of sight during the day. These are spread on the divan and floor at night, for the family to sleep upon. In a corner of the court outside, the family will do its cooking. This describes the way in which hundreds of families exist; at the same time, there are many families that have two or three small rooms which they can call their own.

A large number of houses in Jerusalem are only one story high. Could the houses throughout the city be raised to two stories in height, they would accommodate twice the present number of inhabitants. Again, there must be within the walls as many as forty and perhaps

more than forty acres of ground, not including, of course, the vacant spaces in the Temple area around the Mosque of Omar, that are not occupied by houses and not built upon in any way ; so that, were all the ground covered with houses, and these raised to a height of two or three stories each, Jerusalem, small as it is, could easily accommodate 100,000 or 150,000 people. The convents,—Latin or Roman Catholic, Greek, Russian, and the Armenian,—seem to occupy but a very small space, compared with the entire extent of the city ; but, together, I think they can stow away 15,000 or 20,000 pilgrims, without special discomfort. It happens that the largest number of Christian pilgrims are in the city at Easter, and about that time, on account of the Neby Musa festival, the largest number of Mohammedan pilgrims are also here. The number of the latter varies, from year to year, from 6,000 to 12,000. At that season, the streets during the day are crowded, because they are narrow and everybody is on the go ; but at night all this throng disappears, and it is to be supposed that they find sufficient food and shelter.

There are no rules by which one can judge the capacity of an oriental city. A standing puzzle in Josephus is in regard to the number of people present in Jerusalem at the time of the siege under Titus, and in my judgment it is a question that can never be decided.

But even if these 42,000 or 45,000 people who live in Jerusalem find sleeping places, how do they obtain sufficient food to eat ? This is the great wonder, when one reflects upon the means and character of the inhabitants, taking both Jews and Gentiles together. There are no manufactories here, and no productive industries of any kind. The people, for the most part, are poor. Old Moslem families that two or three generations ago had ample means, have now nearly exhausted their inherited wealth, and are obliged to economize in the most rigid manner, in order to live. Half the Jewish population merely exist on the verge of starvation and beggary. They go about the streets filthy, haggard, and wretched in the extreme. Most of the Christian families are either poor, or have little means at their command.

That there is some wealth in Jerusalem no one can deny ; but I mean to be understood as saying that a larger number of the inhabitants of Jerusalem are in a condition of extreme poverty than of any other city of equal size in the Eastern world.

Many of the Jews who come here are aged, or are in feeble health, and can only be a burden while they live. Very many die every year, and it is noticeable how the broad fields on the slopes of Olivet, where

the Jews are buried, are being widened and extended in every direction year by year.

Notwithstanding the poverty of the people and of the place, there is a constant increase in the number of the inhabitants, and a constant growth in the extent of the city. Twenty years ago there were but three or four buildings outside the walls, while at present they are numbered by hundreds. Were a stranger to visit the city this very year, he would be struck with the amount of building that is going on. But this apparent growth is not a healthy one. We are accustomed to judge of the growth of a place by the results of its productive industries, and by wealth accumulated in other natural ways; but this is not true of Jerusalem. That which we see here is due entirely to foreign capital, and in reality the inhabitants of the city are kept alive by money that comes from abroad.

In this respect, as in many others, Jerusalem is unlike any other city on the globe. Every Jewish family receives public aid. The Jews are divided into national communities, or what is equivalent to that, over which committees preside; and all funds raised in any given country, say, for example, Germany or Russia, are sent to Jerusalem to be divided among the members of the German or Russian community of Jews. In this way every person receives aid which is called "Haluka." Poor Jews in Europe know that, if once they can get to Jerusalem, they will receive something, and, although it be a mere pittance, they think that, by living meanly, it will go a long way towards their maintenance, and perhaps some lucky chance will throw in their way what is needed to make up the actual amount necessary for their support. Hence they come here to live in wretchedness and poverty. As there is no work for them, they live in idleness. Whatever may have been the origin of this Haluka, it has been degraded so that now every dollar contributed in this manner is a positive curse to Jerusalem, and especially to the Jews. What I say now are not the exaggerated statements of a Christian, but the testimony of intelligent Jews themselves. Were this vast amount of money withdrawn, the poor Jews would suffer temporarily, but it would result in driving them into the world, where they could earn a living. This, however, they do not wish to do. These people are willing to have it so. The sentiment of "living in the Holy City" seems to outweigh any discomforts or hardships that may arise from filth, poverty, and want. The Jews throughout the world ought to be ashamed to foster such a spirit, or to perpetuate such a state of things.

If we turn to the Christian population of Jerusalem, we find that matters are not much better than they are among the Jews, although

there is not among them so much desperate poverty. The Protestants form only a very small community, and for a very significant reason,—namely, a reason which expresses a radical difference between Protestantism and the various forms of nominal Christianity. Protestantism teaches independence and self-reliance; the Catholic and Greek churches teach exactly the opposite. Protestants are taught that they must earn their own living, and pay for what they receive. The Latin and Greek convents have vast properties in their possession, and every family belonging to either of these communities has its house rent free. It frequently happens that a family belonging, say to the Greek community, owns a house, but, instead of living in it, they rent it, and get of the Greek convent a house free of rent. This is not done secretly, as might be supposed, but with the full knowledge of the convent authorities. Every family, in like manner, receives a gift of bread twice a week. Occasionally soup is given out in the same way. These simple, or rather characterless Oriental people, reason as follows: "House rent and bread free. Ah! This is a beautiful religion!" Hence they become "Greeks" or "Latins," it is all the same to them which.

The worst of it is that priests and patriarchs foster this pernicious system. Consequently, how can Protestantism, which is directly opposed in its spirit and methods to such a system, gain any foothold on such ground. I frequently say to intelligent travelers that, were I to be a missionary, I would much prefer to go to Stanley's country, the Congo, and labor with the savages, than to attempt to do anything in Jerusalem or Palestine.

It is no exaggeration to say that, taking the Jews and nominal Christians together, two-thirds of the inhabitants of the city are beggars, either actual beggars or polite beggars. By the latter phrase I mean a large class of people who prefer to accept their living, or a great part of it, as a gift, rather than earn it themselves. This state of things which I describe is becoming worse every year. Tens of thousands of pounds are sent here each year, and spent in these so-called charities, thus fostering qualities the very opposite of those in which industrious, enterprising, and prosperous people take pride.

I desire to say something further in connection with this and kindred topics, but, as my letter is already long, I will reserve other material for other occasions.